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Society, April 4th, a paper was read by M. C. Cooke, on a collection of fungi, from Texas, collected by Mr. Ravenel some years ago; the series was small.——*Grevillea* for June contains Ravenel's American Fungi, including, the species issued in the first and second centuries of Ravenel's "American Fungi," with other species, collected at the same time, in insufficient quantities for distribution. Two elaborate monographs on the vine disease; one, published in Italy, by Pirotta, and the other in Austria, by Baron Thälmen, are noticed critically. A valuable article on the salmon disease, due to *Saprolegnia ferax*, which is common on the gold-fish, in aquaria, by W. G. Smith, is reprinted from the Gardener's Chronicle.——The last (20th) volume of Memoirs of the Société National des Sciences Naturelles de Cherbourg, only lately received, contains a life of the eminent botanist, Thuret, by Dr. E. Bornet, with researches on the development of buds in the Equisetaceæ or horse-tails, by E. de Janczewski, while the same author contributes notes on the development of the cystocarpe in the Florideæ, a contribution to the study of the mode of fecundation of the algæ. An essay of one hundred pages, on the industrial plants of Oceania, by Mr. H. Jouan possesses a good deal of practical interest.

ZOÖLOGY.[1]

NOTES ON A NEW JERSEY CARPENTER-BEE.—A species of carpenter-bee (*Xylocopa virginica*) is very abundant in southern New Jersey, gnawing its tunnels most often in rails or fences, but frequently in parts of houses, so that it sometimes becomes a nuisance. As many as fifteen holes I once counted in a single rail, but these were the accumulation of years. The main part of the tunnel runs lengthwise with the grain. There are usually two, but sometimes three, branch tunnels, having a common opening.

I have often wondered how the insect, when fully developed, escapes from the nest in which it has undergone its transformations. Since the egg first laid is in the bottom cell, if the insect from this egg develops soonest it would have to gnaw its way out through the wood (as Reaumur states is the case with the French species *X. violacea*), or, scramble through the tunnel to the opening, to the dismay perhaps of the other bees. On examining a nest in January, 1877, containing five bees, fully formed, I found that the bee nearest the opening was of the darkest color—there being a regular gradation in color from this bee to the lightest colored one at the termination of the tunnel. I also noticed that the bees were in a similar position, back upwards and *head toward the opening*, and, although the partitions were destroyed, the raspings composing them lying on the lower side of the horizontal tunnel, the bees did not appear to have moved out of their original cell limits.

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[1] The departments of Ornithology and Mammalogy are conducted by Dr. ELLIOTT COUES, U. S. A.

According to Reaumur, *Xylocopa violacea* so constructs its tunnel that the terminal cell ends very near the surface of the wood. This makes escape easy; but no such provision exists in any specimens of nests of *Xylocopa virginica* that I have examined, and I have never seen *but a single opening in nests from which the bees had escaped.* From the preceding facts it would appear probable that the insects escape from the original and only opening of the nest, and in order of position. I notice that there is a gradation in the length of the cells—the terminal or bottom cell being the shortest. The greatest number of bees I ever found in a nest was eleven. Woodpeckers seem to prey to some extent on the larvæ, or pupæ, as would appear from certain conical-jagged holes opening into successive cells. A specimen of such a nest may be seen in the Entomological Laboratory of Cornell University.—*Henry Turner.*

THE SKUNK EATEN BY THE LYNX.—Observing in a late number of the NATURALIST, the note "Food of the Skunk," reminds me that I have lately seen that the skunk is itself food for at least one animal. Dissecting a wild cat (*Lynx rufus*) two days since, I found bunches of woolly hair in the intestine. These had no perceptible odor. Upon opening the gullet, however, near the stomach I found a roll of skin and hair which at once announced its proper belongings by a stifling wave of the peculiar mephitic stench of the skunk. I did not look further, but contented myself with the reflection *de gustibus*, etc.

The lynx is said to feed upon rabbits, rats, squirrels and upon such birds as roost or breed on the ground, varying its diet from time to time with fish and frogs. The unusually mild winter through which we have passed and the absence of snow forbids the idea that hunger drove it to partake of skunk—besides which the lynx was very fat. The bunches of hair in the intestine may have been the remnants of some previous meal, or they may have been of the skunk but deodorized by bile. Perhaps strong alkalies may be found to destroy the odor of this stinking beast's secretion.—*B. W. Barton, M.D.*, 117 *W. Madison Street, Baltimore, Md.*

CARNIVOROUS TADPOLES.—About thirty years ago Prof. S. F. Baird stated that the best method of cleaning the skeletons of small animals is to place them in a vessel of water containing living tadpoles of some of our common frogs. The tadpoles devour the macerated flesh with rapidity, leaving a ligamentous skeleton prepared with the greatest nicety. The species which Prof. Baird found most effective is the *Rana sylvatica.* This fact has been recently revived in some of the English scientific journals, and still more lately Miss S. P. Monks has made the same observation at Cold Spring, New York. Tadpoles are primarily, as the structure of the intestines indicates, vegetable feeders, but appropriate any organic matter in a state of maceration.